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**DAVIS URGES SWIFT ACTION FOR TENNESSEE'S FARMERS
DURING HEARING ON AGRICULTURE DISASTER CONDITIONS**

Tennessee Agriculture Commissioner Testifies on Freeze, Drought Damage

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 25, 2007) -- U.S. Rep. Lincoln Davis (TN-4) today said Tennessee farmers have experienced an unprecedented loss this year due to the spring freeze and record breaking drought.

Davis conveyed this message along with Tennessee Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens, who testified at the invitation of the Congressman, during a hearing on agriculture disaster conditions throughout the United States held by the House Agriculture Committee.

"Tennessee's farmers, like others throughout the southeast, are having a tough time keeping their operations running and have sustained a monetary and product loss that will be felt for some time to come," said Davis, Tennessee's sole member of the committee. "Tennessee's economy, while becoming more diverse over the past few years, relies on agriculture for revenue and I do not want progress stymied during a time when economic growth is so badly needed in rural areas."

Projected losses to row crop and nursery stock conservatively range from \$750- \$850 million. These estimates do not include livestock producers. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor more than half (61 percent) of Tennessee is classified as "exceptional."

"I appreciate Congressman Davis' leadership on the House Agriculture Committee in helping to bring focus to the issue of providing federal disaster assistance to Tennessee farmers," Commissioner Givens said. "There's no doubt that this has been a devastating year for farmers, and all sectors of our industry have suffered unprecedented losses. With Governor Bredesen's support, we're doing our share at the state level to help farmers better manage weather extremes, but additional federal assistance is desperately needed to help producers recover losses."

Recently, Congressman Davis brought Committee Chairman Collin Peterson to Tennessee so local officials and farmers could brief him on the needs of the State. Peterson agreed that time is of the essence to get disaster aid out to states like Tennessee.

Since that time, Davis has had correspondence with Peterson requesting an active role the drafting process of a disaster relief bill

Also, Davis and the rest of the Tennessee Congressional delegation are pushing to expand disaster assistance for Tennessee's agricultural community to help cover the massive losses associated with the spring freeze and record breaking drought. As it now stands, Tennessee farmers are not eligible for disaster assistance for damage caused after February 28, 2007. Efforts are under way to move the cut-off date to December 21, 2007.

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